

March 24, 2015

Arthur S. Johnston, III
United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi
United States Courthouse
501 E. Court Street, 2.500
Jackson, MS 39201

Re: Request to be listed as an Interested Party in the Olivia Y. v. Phil Bryant
lawsuit
Case # 3:04 cv 251

Dear Mr. Johnston:

I am writing on the behalf of The Baptist Children's Village (BCV). The BCV is a faith-based, residential childcare agency. We are based in Mississippi and have been serving children and families in Mississippi since 1897. At this writing, the BCV offers 118 beds in 14 home-like cottages on seven campuses across the state. These beds are available both to children in the custody of the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) and to children in the custody of private individuals who, for varied reasons, have become unable to provide these children with the day to day care they need. These beds are provided to both MDHS and private individuals at no cost to either party. The BCV does not accept MDHS board payments or charge for its services. We are supported by the Mississippi Baptist Convention, and the financial and material gifts of individuals and other entities across the state who are aware of the needs of Mississippi children and families, and who are committed to alleviating these needs through the services the BCV provides. We continue to be voluntarily licensed by MDHS, at this time.

In addition to our residential care services, we operate an in-home family support program, the Dorcas Program, in three Mississippi Department of Human Services regions. The goal of this program is to assist families who are near the point of their children being removed by MDHS, so as to make such removal unnecessary. These services are also provided at no cost to the state or the client, and are consistent with the spirit of the Olivia Y. lawsuit.

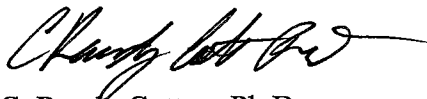
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We have been impacted daily in both our operations and ministry goals by the Olivia Y. suit, the settlement agreements, and the efforts of all involved parties to bring this suit to resolution. We have been, and continue to be, to the greatest degree allowed, active in our own efforts to work in partnership with MDHS and our sister agencies across the state. As you might imagine, the environment in which these efforts have been made has been marked by fluidity and instability. In my capacity as the Director of Programs and Clinical Services, trying to keep our agency in compliance with these efforts can become frustrating.

Therefore, in light of our mission and our commitment to Mississippi children and families, to the faith-based community of Mississippi, and, specifically, to our Baptist stakeholders and in light of the recent events related to the Olivia Y. lawsuit and the potential impact of these events, we respectfully request to be made an Interested Party to this suit. Being made such will allow us to stay informed as to future proceedings, to become appropriately involved and to formulate plans to continue the mission to which we strongly hold.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Please feel free to contact me via phone at 601.952.2422 or email at rcotton@baptistchildrensvillage.com, should you require additional information or have questions.

Sincerely,



C. Randy Cotton, Ph.D.
Director of Programs and Clinical Services
The Baptist Children's Village
P.O. Box 27
Clinton, MS 39060
601.952.2422
FAX 601.952.2906
rcotton@baptistchildrensvillage.com